
Security Assistance Planning and Resource Management (SAM-P) Course Tirana, Albania, September 17, 2001

By

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DISAM recently completed its first mobile education team (MET) course in Albania. During the week of September 17, 2001, the three-person DISAM team consisting of Virginia Caudill, Director of Management Studies, Bob Hanseman, Associate Professor, and MAJ Dennis Olson, Deputy Director of International Studies conducted a Security Assistance Planning and Resource Management (SAM-P) Course in Tirana. The class of twenty students, representing primarily the Ministry of Defense and the General Staff, included directors and staff from the Ministry of Finance, the Public Procurement Directorate, and the military services as well.



Security Assistance Planning and Resource Management (SAM-P) Class held at Tirana, Albania on September 17, 2001.

Ambassador Joseph Limprecht and Brigadier General Pëllumb Qazimi, Chief of the General Staff of the Albanian Armed Forces set the stage for penetrating questions and lively discussions that thoroughly examined the world of security cooperation, foreign military financing (FMF) and international military education and training programs. In terms of democracy, Albania has a brief and turbulent history since the fall of communism. However, since the crisis of 1997, the government has endeavored feverishly at tackling the multitude of challenges that beset this little-known country. Security assistance has played, and will continue to play a crucial role in this progress.



A country renowned for its hospitality, the warmth displayed by each and every Albanian encountered during the 10-day stay clearly illustrated this to be one tradition that steadfastly endures. From the introductory office calls with Brigadier General Qazimi, Colonel Sula, Director of Logistics, and Lieutenant Colonel Kara, Director of Finance to the dinner hosted by Colonel Hudhra, Director of Defense Planning and Policy, everyone expressed their dismay and disdain for the attacks of September 11th. For the instructors, the centerpiece of this trip was the visits to the 2nd Navy District headquarters in Vlore and the Historic and Ethnographic Museum in Kruja. The latter demonstrated the strength and influence Albania enjoyed in the past while the former served to reinforce the tremendous effect security assistance programs, particularly the excess defense articles program, has had in the transformation of the Albanian armed forces.



Major Hajro, Albanian General Staff, J5, Elez Shiqerukaj and MAJ Zabrzkeski of ODC Albania.

The Office of Defense Cooperation in Tirana superbly orchestrated support for the DISAM team. MAJ Michael Zabrzkeski, Elez Shiqerukaj, and Mirela Hoxhallari all contributed directly to the success of this training. Additionally, our lead interpreter and gracious host, Major Agim Hajro of the Albanian General Staff made every effort to insure our stay was comfortable, educational, and most of all, successful.

In conclusion, we are confident that the training objectives set out for this Mobile Education Team were met completely. We are further hopeful that this training will serve to

strengthen the ties of friendship and cooperation between the United States and Albania. DISAM looks forward to return visits to this hidden gem as well as the opportunity to welcome more Albanian students to resident courses in Dayton.



Sokol Dervishi, Chief of Minister of Defense's Cabinet (left) and Elizabeth Shelton, Deputy Chief of Mission, American Embassy, Tirana (third from left), presented remarks at graduation.

About the Author

Major Dennis M. Olson, Jr. is the seminar director for all European seminars conducted at the Defense Institute of Security Assistance Management. He is a member of the U.S. Army Aviation branch and is qualified to fly the UH-1H, OH-58, and AH-1F helicopters. He is also an Army foreign area officer specializing in Western Europe. Major Olson came to DISAM with nine years of unit and staff experience in Europe and holds a Master of Arts degree in Western European Studies from Indiana University and a Bachelor of Arts degree from the University of Montana. He is a graduate of the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College and the Defense Language Institute where he studied French.